



# **First Steps**

## **2011 Open Bid Application Packet**

The Bureau of Child Development Services (BCDS) is accepting contract application requests for the contract funding year 2011 - 2012. Enclosed in the application packet are the required documents needed for the application approval process.



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## INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE:

Indiana's Early Intervention System for infants, toddlers and their families are seeking applicants for a contract opportunity to act as the Fiscal Agent for the Local Planning and Coordinating Council (LPCC) and the System Point of Entry (SPOE), which includes Service Coordination (SC) and Eligibility Determination (ED) Teams. The Fiscal Agent will be responsible for grant funds and overseeing program management. Contracts will be offered to each Cluster who can demonstrate an ability to coordinate the activities required under federal and state regulations for Part C.

### Terms for Cluster Fiscal Agents: (A not-for-profit agency is ideal, but not required)

1. Must adhere to State and federal laws, regulations and policies
2. Must agree to a cost reimbursement contract that requires an outcome-based agreement and the ability to cover expenses for 45-60 days
3. Must be incorporated as a not-for-profit and in good standing with the State of Indiana and the First Steps system
4. Must have an annual audit prepared by an independent certified public accountant documenting sufficient internal controls, pursuant to the level of not-for-profit status
5. Must be bonded and insured
6. Must be experienced with public resources and monitoring sub-recipients
7. Must be experienced working with multiple funding sources
8. Must be registered with the Secretary of State as a not-for-profit.
9. Must not be a provider of First Steps early intervention services within the cluster, with the exception of service coordinators and eligibility determination (ED) team members
10. Must have additional agency income with a value of 10% or greater of the total grant award

**Please sign below to attest compliance for the above terms.**

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Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed

**The deadline for submission of the application is June 3, 2011.**

*Any application submitted after the June 3<sup>rd</sup> deadline will be subject to a delay in contract implementation and prorating of funding. All clarifications to the application must be submitted and approved prior to initiation of the contract. Applications not fully approved may be subject to delayed implementation of the contract and pro-rating of funding.*

- The contract is built upon a performance-based system. Funds will not be reimbursed without documentation of meeting the required outcomes.
- The travel reimbursement rate is limited to the State reimbursement rate.
- The application will be written for a two-year period.
- Fiscal Agents will submit claims and supporting documentation.

## BUDGET SUMMARY INSTRUCTIONS

**PLEASE NOTE:** Separate budget summaries must be completed for the LPCC and the SPOE-SC.

**BUDGET ITEM SUMMARY:** Budget items are to be included for each major funding category (other federal, other state, other local or in-kind) to indicate the budget required to administer this grant activity. The use of other funding for the coordination of the activities under this grant activity is encouraged. The performance allocation is 5% for the LPCC budget and 10% for the SPOE-SC budget. Each percentage point is tied to a service outcome listed later in this document.

**PERSONNEL SUMMARY:** LPCC staffing must be based on identified outcomes for the cluster and practical application of the grant allocation. Staffing patterns by county will not be approved. All SPOE intake coordinators and Service Coordinators must have direct programmatic supervision by the SPOE or SC supervisor. List each position title that will be working directly with this grant and the funding attached to the position **regardless of whether it is a salaried or contract position.**

**BUDGET NARRATIVE:** Attach a budget narrative which identifies the sources and dollar amounts of other federal, other state, other local and in-kind contributions used to support this grant activity, the basis for, and what is included in your fringe benefits. List any service you plan to contract. List any equipment you plan to purchase with First Steps funds. List the basis for your travel budget (mileage/per diem rates must be at or below the State reimbursement rate). Include a copy of your approved **indirect cost plan**, and include the basis for the other costs under item 3. **Explain how the budget is within scope of the grant project.**

**Note:** Narratives for the purpose of this RFF are due at the end of the first quarter of the state fiscal year (Sept. 30, 2011)

### LINE ITEM DEFINITIONS:

1. **PERSONNEL SALARIES AND FRINGE/CONTRACTED SERVICES** – the amount needed to pay for salaries and fringe benefits of those people performing grant activities. **Include the definition of a FTE (e.g., 1 FTE = 40 hrs. per week).** The amount needed to pay for contracted services for this grant activity. **A written agreement/contract must be on file with the Lead Agency which specifies the service(s) to be purchased, the content, and the rate of costs** for all contracted services.
2. **MATERIALS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT** – the amount needed to pay for the materials and supplies cost for this grant activity. Public relations (PR) materials not clearly related to the successful achievement of an outcome will not be considered appropriate expenditures. Prior to any purchase of printed materials for Public Relations or advertising purposes (parent fliers and brochures included), the Fiscal Agent must receive approval from the State Agency. The amount needed to pay for the equipment to be used for this grant activity. Equipment is an article of non-expendable tangible personal property with a unit cost of \$500 or more and a useful life of two years or more. Title to the equipment is vested to the State. Items purchased at a cost of \$5000 or more require separate prior approval and must be made in accordance with standard procurement procedures.
3. **TRAVEL** – the amount needed to pay for travel associated with providing services under this grant.
4. **ALL OTHER DIRECT COSTS** – the amount needed to pay utilities, telephone, postage and other costs. Other costs are direct costs and cannot be included in the other four line items but are associated with this grant project. A detailed cost plan must be submitted with the original budget.
5. **INDIRECT COSTS** – the amount needed to pay for costs associated with this grant project. The items are not charged on a direct basis and therefore are budgeted in accordance with **a cost rate or a cost allocation plan**. A copy of the cost plan must be submitted with the original budget for this grant. The administrative cost is limited to 5 % cap or 7% with a required 3% match.
6. **OCCUPANCY** – the amount needed to pay for rent costs for this grant.

***Budget applications must be submitted and approved prior to expenditure of the funds. Deadline for budget submissions will be June 1 of each year of the contract. If any line item is modified by 10% or more over the course of the contract, prior approval by the Lead Agency must be obtained. This includes the increase or decrease of any individual line items. Application requests must be submitted to the Lead Agency to allow adequate time for review.***

## LPCC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 1 (95%)

Reporting Period FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)

**CLUSTER COUNTIES:**

Budget Summary	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All Other Direct Costs				
6. Indirect Costs				
<b>Total Budgeted</b>				

## LPCC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 2 Performance Metric Allocation (5%)

Reporting Period FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)

**CLUSTER COUNTIES:**

Budget Summary	Part C	Other	In-kind	Total
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All Other Direct Costs				
6. Indirect Costs				

**PERSONNEL SUMMARY:**

LPCC staffing must be based on identified outcomes for the cluster and practical application of the grant allocation. Staffing patterns for each county will not be approved. List each position title and attach job descriptions for everyone working directly with this grant and the funding attached to the position **regardless of whether it is a salaried or contract position.** Sequoia job classes must be used under the Title column.

**Sequoia Job Titles**

Intake Coordinator – Performs all duties required to enroll eligible children in early intervention following all State and Federal regulations.

Intake/Service Coordinator Supervisor – Responsible for coordination and supervision of Intake/Service Coordinators.

LPCC Coordinator- Assist with implementing First Steps system at local level; performs related public awareness activities; ensures RFF outcomes/components are met.

LPCC Support Staff- Provides administrative support assisting with LPCC related activities and tasks.

Service Coordinator- Assists and enables an eligible child/family to receive services provided under the First Steps system; includes implementation of IFSP and reevaluations.

SPOE Supervisor – Manager responsible for directing First Steps SPOE staff and activities for Cluster; related fiscal agency tasks, ensuring compliance of guidelines.

SPOE Support Staff – Performs clerical tasks supporting First Steps program including general office duties as well as assist Intake Coordinators or Service Coordinators.

## LPCC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 3

Reporting Period FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)

**CLUSTER COUNTIES:**

**NOTE: All contracted and employed staff is subject to Lead Agency approval.**

Costs					Funding			
Title	Total Personnel Cost	Salary	Fringe Benefit Cost	FTE	Cost from Part C	Other	In-kind	Total (Must match Total Personnel Summary)
<b>Total Budgeted</b>								



## LPCC BUDGET NARRATIVE

**1. Personnel Salaries and Fringe / Contracted Services (Must include salary range per job title with explanation of proposed salary increases and/or performance pay. Salary and benefit costs must be broken apart)**

**2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment:**

**3. Travel:**

**4. Occupancy:**

**5. All Other Direct Costs:**

**6. Indirect Costs (including Cost Allocation Plan):**

**SPOE-SC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 1 (90%)**

**Reporting Period FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)**

**CLUSTER COUNTIES:**

<b>Budget Summary</b>	<b>Part C</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>In-kind</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All other Direct Costs				
6. Indirect Costs				
<b>Total Budgeted</b>				

**SPOE-SC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 2 Performance Metric Allocation (10%)**

**Reporting Period FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)**

**CLUSTER COUNTIES:**

<b>Budget Summary</b>	<b>Part C</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>In-kind</b>	<b>Total</b>
1. Personnel/ Contracted Services				
2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment				
3. Travel				
4. Occupancy				
5. All other Direct Costs				
6. Indirect Costs				
<b>Total Budgeted</b>				

## SPOE-SC BUDGET SUMMARY – Part 3

Reporting Period FY 2012 (July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2012)

**CLUSTER COUNTIES:**

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### PERSONNEL SUMMARY

**NOTE:** All contracted and employed staff is subject to Lead Agency approval. Sequoia job classes must be used under the Title column.

Costs					Funding			
Title	Total Personnel Cost	Salary	Fringe Benefit Cost	FTE	Cost from Part C	Other	In-kind	Total (Must match Total Personnel Summary)
Total Budgeted								

## SPOE-SC BUDGET NARRATIVE

**1. Personnel Salaries and Fringe / Contracted Services: (Must include salary range per job title with explanation of proposed salary increases and/or performance pay. Salary and benefit costs must be broken apart)**

**2. Materials, Supplies and Equipment:**

**3. Travel:**

**4. Occupancy:**

**5. All Other Direct Costs:**

**6. Indirect Costs (including Cost Allocation Plan):**

## INTERNET ACCESS FOR CLUSTER PERSONNEL

### 1. FULL INTERNET ACCESS:

All cluster personnel must have access to the Internet via high speed connection that has sufficient security measures in place. All staff must have individual email addresses.

### 2. DEFINITION OF FULL INTERNET ACCESS:

Full Internet access shall mean the ability to send and receive electronic mail with attachments, without limitations to size or format of the attachments, and access to the World Wide Web.

### 3. FREE EMAIL ACCOUNTS:

We will not accept free email accounts that limit or prohibit the personnel's ability to accept attachments regardless of size or format

### 4. CHANGE OF LPCC/SPOE INFORMATION:

All changes, such as personnel, telephone numbers, fax numbers, addresses, etc., must be emailed to the Lead Agency at the [FirstStepsWeb@fssa.in.gov](mailto:FirstStepsWeb@fssa.in.gov) no later than 2 business days.

### 5. USE OF PERSONNEL EMAIL/INTERNET ACCOUNT:

Only the staff should have access to the email/internet account. The email/Internet account, as with other equipment, is to be used for LPCC/SPOE business only. Access to the staff software, email, and information should be granted only to First Steps personnel.

### 6. FREQUENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHECKING EMAIL:

Email should be checked at a minimum daily.

**7. FIRST STEPS WEB ADDRESS:** The First Steps web site address is: [www.firststeps.in.gov](http://www.firststeps.in.gov) . Please check the website at a minimum of once per week.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

Date Signed



## **LOCAL PLANNING COORDINATING COUNCIL (LPCC) - OUTCOMES**

The primary responsibility of the LPCC is to identify issues in the delivery of services and to design and implement strategies to effectively address these issues. Through the LPCC, community resources and providers are identified and coordinated. Improvement in communication and cooperation among agencies and individuals are a direct result of the efforts of the LPCCs. Each LPCC has a First Steps Coordinator and members composed of at least two parents of children with disabilities under the age of 12, one health or medical representative, one educational representative, one social service representative, one early intervention service provider, one Head Start representative and a person representing Child Care in the area. Each county in the cluster must be represented. Active representation of other community leaders is encouraged. Membership must represent the underserved population and demographic make-up of the counties it serves. As with any staff member, volunteers need to be recruited, trained, and supported

### **LPCC Instructions:**

The application must address the required LPCC outcomes listed on the following pages. A basic narrative illustrating how the applicant will meet the minimum requirements must also be submitted. Please note that the outcomes and minimum requirements are subject to change. Performance standards have been identified for each outcome and each cluster is expected to personalize the strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of the counties within the cluster. The Lead Agency has identified the means by which the performance standards will be measured.

Each cluster's LPCC allocation is the maximum amount available. To receive the full amount the LPCC will be required to meet performance standards as outlined in their contract. Expenses and activities conducted on behalf of the cluster must be tied to an outcome as listed in the application. Requests for reimbursement may be submitted on a monthly basis for costs incurred.

The Lead Agency has identified funds to be awarded upon meeting performance standards. These will be tied to the achievement of the LPCC outcomes as written in the application. The completed documentation form will be due to the Lead Agency (November 15 and March 15) based on the information presented by the cluster; the performance allocations identified on Budget Summary Part 2 may be released based on the achievement of the performance standards. If the cluster is unable to verify achievement of the performance standards, access to these funds will not be granted.

The quarterly activity calendars, in addition to listing regular maintenance activities, should identify specific needs based on cluster concerns and data and provide specific targeted activities to address those needs. For instance, if referrals fall off from a specific county or source or there are some difficulties with scheduling transition meetings within a certain school district, then activities should be designed to meet that need.

The following outcomes will be utilized as markers of success. Each outcome will be worth one percent of the contract amount (one half of a percent for each progress report period). The SPOE will only be allowed to bill for these performance metrics after the state has determined which outcomes have been met following each progress period.

## I. PUBLIC AWARENESS & CHILD FIND

**Outcome Statement:** Support the awareness and visibility of the First Steps system throughout the cluster to assist in the increased identification and referral of infants and toddlers.

**Performance Standards:**

1. 1.4% of children served with an IFSP will be under the age of 1 year.
2. The population served will be comparable to the demographics of the cluster.
3. Appropriate and timely referrals are to be made to the SPOE from a variety of community partners.
4. 3% of the cluster's infants and toddlers population will be served\*.

**Performance Measures:** Profile reports and First Steps data system reports will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard. Cluster will meet performance metrics if cluster child counts remain within .5% of the current count, up to the target.

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

- |  |
|--|
| 1. As directed by the Lead Agency, the cluster will track primary and secondary sources of children eligible and not eligible for the program.   |
| 2. Conduct training to local referral sources on eligibility guidelines and referral procedures on a monthly basis.  |
| 3. Conduct monthly informational activities throughout the cluster that describe the First Steps system. Child care agencies, physicians' offices, social service agencies and community agencies must be contacted on an ongoing basis. |
| 4. Develop and maintain Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with referring agencies.  |
| 5. Develop strategic plan to identify requirements for children under age one.   |

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements and implementation of activities identified in the approved activity calendars. [see instructions on previous page]

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed

\* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP



## II. PROVIDER RECRUITMENT and PROVIDER MATRIX

**Outcome Statement:** Families are presented with adequate information to make an informed choice regarding the selection of providers and location of services.

**Performance Standards:**

1. Families in all areas of the cluster will have available providers for needed services.

**Performance Measures:** Profile reports and First Steps data system reports will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard.

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Monitor the provider matrix and address any non-compliance issues or concerns on an on-going basis to ensure that providers are available in all 16 services and ensure an adequate choice of providers for families.
2. Maintain regular communication with all cluster providers and coordinators.
3. Provide strategies to address any provider availability concerns.
4. Provide, at least quarterly, opportunities for provider networking and/or mentoring.

.....  
**NARRATIVE:**

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed

### III. PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS, INFORMATION & SERVICES, and QUALITY ASSURANCE

**Outcome Statement:** First Steps will be responsive to the priorities of families and providers through ongoing communication that will provide input into the system to include timely access to early intervention services.

**Performance Standards:**

1. Ensure services are provided in the natural environment to the most extent possible and are also monitored to ensure that IFSP teams make individualized decisions regarding the settings in which infants and toddlers receive EI services\*.
2. All issues and concerns will be adequately addressed within 60 days of receipt of concern, utilizing procedures as set forth by the Lead Agency. Formal complaints must be forwarded to the State within two business days\*.

**Performance Measures:** Profile reports, First Steps data system reports, and family surveys will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard. Complete and accurate monthly concern/complaint logs are required to meet this standard.

#### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

- |   |
|---|
| 1. Will conduct self assessment activities, including surveys, as directed by the Lead Agency. Implement strategies to improve the system based on the results of the self-assessment activities.   |
| 2. Facilitate ongoing communication with parents, providers and local referral sources to increase awareness of local resources and program information updated regularly. Strategies may include: local meetings, newsletters, office visits.  |
| 3. Develop and implement a process to address concerns following State guidelines and adhering to state reporting requirements*.  |
| 4. Develop and maintain a cluster wide resource directory of services and activities to support families and children. The directory should be available to all Service Coordinators within the cluster and must contain a minimum of: Alternative Services, Child Care opportunities, Pre-school opportunities, Private Services, Community Centers, Park & Recreation, Libraries, Outpatient Therapies, Mom's Day Out, Information on disabilities and development (the "Rainbow Book")*. |
| 5. Identify and ensure an adequate number of surrogate parents are available within the cluster.<br><i>Provide a narrative below for the identification and training of surrogate parents</i>   |
| 6. A cluster website must be maintained and updated regularly.  |

**Narrative:**

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

\* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed

## IV. TRANSITION & INTERAGENCY AGREEMENTS

**Outcome Statement:** Increase access to family resources and collaboration of social service agencies to create smooth transitions for infants, toddlers, and families into, within and out of the early intervention system.

**Performance Standards:**

1. Have current, signed Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with all special education planning districts, Head Start and early Head Start that are actively evaluated and shared with the community.
2. Conduct planned transition activities such as transition trainings with staff and meetings/trainings with community partners and parents to address transition issues or topics with each Special Education Planning District within the cluster on a semi-annual basis. Knowledge of transition options is increased as a result of quarterly meetings/trainings with service coordinators, community partners, and parents.

**Performance Measures:** SPOE Report, Exit survey data, Closure form, Peer Review, and IFSP transition pages will be utilized in the measurement of this performance standard.

**MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Develop and maintain Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with all special education planning districts and Head Start/Early Head Start for the cluster. Each MOA must be reviewed and updated annually.
2. Maintain a cluster transition committee comprised of parents, providers, service coordinators, representatives from all local lead education agencies (LEAs) and Head Start. The transition committee will identify community resources and work to meet outcomes as developed by the Lead Agency and the State Transition Team. By April 1, 2010, the cluster will submit a list of the members of the cluster transition committee, a cluster transition plan, and an activity calendar to support transition activities and include a minimum of:
  - Quarterly staff meeting
  - Quarterly meetings with Community partners (e.g. Transition Committee)
  - Annual Transition informational meetings including: Part C, Part B, parents, Head Start in each Special Education Planning District (meetings may be combined as appropriate)

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed

## V. FUNCTIONS OF THE LPCC

**Outcome Statement:** Each cluster will have a single LPCC which shall consist of active members from each county who reasonably represent the population of the cluster. LPCC members shall include, at a minimum, the following:

- Two (2) parents of children with disabilities under the age of 12.
- One (1) health or medical representative;
- One (1) educational representative;
- One (1) social services representative;
- One (1) early intervention service provider;
- (1) Head Start representative; and
- One (1) child care representative.

**Performance Standard:**

1. LPCC will meet a minimum of quarterly with the required membership.
2. LPCC must comply with RMS requests within 2 business days and update information, including submitting staff information and changes, etc.
3. By-laws must be approved by the State

**Performance Measures:** Membership list and minutes of meetings will be utilized in the measurement of the performance standard

### MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS:

1. Ensure the membership of the LPCC adequately reflects the underserved population and demographic make - up of the county and includes at a minimum those persons as listed above. Ensure one of the parents has no other affiliation or role in First Steps and is not attending with the financial support of another program. State will develop and send out attendance sheets for LPCC meetings in order to track attendance and voting rights.
2. Ensure there are procedures in place to inform families about the LPCC and invite them to attend meetings,
3. Give adequate advance notification of meetings to all interested parties.
4. Ensure LPCC activities comply with state required by-laws, which should include at a minimum: policies and procedures for conflict resolution, conflict of interest, membership and voting requirements, and loyalty/confidentiality clause. All by-laws must be approved by the lead agency.
5. Formally evaluate the effectiveness of all system processes conducted by contractors, coordinators, fiscal agent and SPOE functions.
6. Maintain contracts for all persons who receive or manage funds for the LPCC.
7. Monitor and track assistive technology (AT) and ensure the re-use of AT equipment.

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed



## **SYSTEM POINT OF ENTRY (SPOE) - OUTCOMES**

The System Point of Entry (SPOE) is the central point that is responsible for ensuring that all children and their families referred to First Steps receive a timely response and that the delegated activities are conducted with families in a prompt, professional, culturally competent, and family-centered manner. Each SPOE serves as the electronic link between First Steps and the Central Reimbursement Office (CRO). Each cluster is required to identify a single SPOE location where general operations and all early intervention records and electronic files will be maintained. Depending upon the local needs and configuration there may be satellite offices or contracted intake staff in other locations in the cluster. All referrals are electronically stored, and routine updates to this information are made based upon the information obtained and the decisions made with regard to eligibility, service planning, and service delivery through the development of an IFSP.

The SPOE must respond to all referrals by conducting a face-to-face interview with the family to obtain informed consent and written permission to proceed from the parent/legal guardian. Due process and procedural safeguard information is introduced during the initial interview and all subsequent procedural safeguard moments.

The SPOE, on behalf of the Lead Agency, is responsible to ensure that all of the opportunities available under IDEA, Part C are made available to families. The SPOE is to ensure that families are given accurate and timely information, with full understanding of the family's rights, opportunities and responsibilities under federal and State regulations. (470 IAC 3.1)

The application must address the required SPOE outcomes, including Service Coordination, listed on the following pages. A basic narrative illustrating how the applicant will meet the minimum requirements must also be submitted. A description of how the agency would support the supervision of service coordinators must also be submitted. Please note that the outcomes and minimum requirements are subject to change. Performance standards have been identified for each outcome and each cluster is expected to personalize the strategies and activities to meet the individual needs of the counties within the cluster. The Lead Agency has identified the means by which the performance standards will be measured.

Each cluster's SPOE allocation is the maximum amount available to the cluster to achieve the SPOE outcomes as listed in this application. Expenses and activities conducted on behalf of the cluster must be tied to an outcome as listed in the application. Requests for reimbursement may be submitted on a monthly basis for costs incurred. Documentation of cluster activities toward meeting outcomes may be requested monthly to support claims (please see sample monthly claim forms).

The Lead Agency has identified funds to be awarded upon meeting performance standards. These will be tied to the achievement of the SPOE outcomes as written in the application. The completed documentation form will be due to the Lead Agency (November 15 and March 15) based on the information presented by the cluster; the performance allocations identified on Budget Summary Part 2, may be released based on the achievement of the performance standards. If the cluster is unable to verify achievement of the performance standards, access to these funds will not be granted.

## I. SPOE REQUIREMENTS

### SPOE OFFICE

1. The SPOE must have an independent First Steps identity exclusive of an affiliation with any other entity.
2. Must be in good standing with the First Steps system.
3. The SPOE will maintain all early intervention records and electronic files in single location.
4. During normal business hours, the referral phone must be answered by a SPOE Staff. If a call rolls over to voice mail, the call must be returned within two business days. If the phone has a “zero” option, it may only transfer to paid FS staff.
5. The SPOE offices must be handicapped accessible, and available to the general community 5 days per week, 52 weeks a year during normal business hours, for example: 9:00 am to 5:00 p.m. The operating hours should be posted at the office for the general public, and should be indicated on the phone system. The offices should have staff **present and available to respond to phone calls as well as provide supervisory direction and support** at all times, except during the posted lunch times. The SPOE must also respond to requests by state staff within 2 business days.
6. The SPOE must be able to electronically scan documents for the purpose of document sharing and distribution.

### SPOE STAFF

7. SPOE staff must meet appropriate early intervention (EI) credentialing requirements and be in good standing with the First Steps system. All intake and service coordinators must receive direct programmatic supervision from the SPOE (or SC) supervisor.
8. With the exception of service coordination, no SPOE personnel may provide ongoing early intervention services (this includes paid or unpaid positions).
9. SPOE personnel (paid or unpaid positions) may not supervise ongoing EI providers or work for another early intervention provider.
10. Must have working knowledge of the First Steps system, due process, and procedural safeguards.
11. Must understand the application process for multiple program eligibility standards at the minimum Children’s Medicaid and Medicaid Waiver.
12. Must have working knowledge of the following State and federal regulations:
  - Early intervention record development, maintenance
  - IFSP development
  - Transition
  - Confidentiality (FERPA)
  - Family centered care and natural environments
  - Service Coordination
13. Must have knowledge of community and state programs as well as financial and support resources.
14. Must communicate data entry information daily to the Central Reimbursement Office.

15. SPOEs must implement a State approved Quality Assurance plan that includes direct supervision of staff.
16. SPOEs must hold, at a minimum, regular staff meetings with regular attendance by all service and intake coordinators and maintain a log of attendance and follow up methods for those coordinators who are unable to attend.
17. All staff must be identified publicly as representatives of First Steps and not of the employing agency.
18. No persons directly related may be placed in a direct supervisory-subordinate relationship. SPOE staff may not have a direct relationship with any provider serving within the same cluster.
19. Must meet Federal and State Regulations and Policy and Procedures as they relate to Part C of IDEA.
20. The SPOE and all relevant staff must comply with RMS requests in a timely manner and update information, including submitting staff information changes, etc.
21. SPOE personnel must meet enrollment and credentialing guidelines and be in good standing with the First Steps system.
22. The SPOE must have a Spanish-speaking staff and an intake coordinator trained in Sky\*Hi (to more actively work with families with hearing loss).
23. Spanish Interpreter services will not be authorized for intake and ongoing service coordination without prior approval from the State.
24. Initial SC (SC101) training is to be completed over the course of not less than one month, and caseloads will be built gradually after training is completed. New SC's will not assume a full caseload immediately upon completion of training.

## II. SPOE FUNCTIONS

1. REFERRALS - Receive referrals (verbal or written)
  - a) Establish the initial early intervention and electronic record with the CRO
2. INTAKE - Conduct and complete intake activities
  - a) Obtain informed written parental consent to proceed
  - b) Initiate requests for information with informed, written parental consent
  - c) Conduct a comprehensive developmental screening and parent interview to determine areas of concern
  - d) Intake activities must be conducted in the family's primary language or other mode of communication, including in writing, of the family's rights and procedural safeguards
  - e) Communicate with the referral source regarding next steps
  - f) Facilitate application through use of the Combined Enrollment Form to programs such as Hoosier Healthwise, CSHCS, etc.
  - g) Provide families with additional resource information regarding programs for which the family or child may be eligible, to address the needs of the family\*.
3. ACCESS - Facilitate access for children and their families to programs and services that will help families support the child's growth and development.
4. RECORD - Develop the Early Intervention (EI) Record for each child referred
  - a) SPOE will maintain the original EI record of each child referred to the SPOE.
  - b) The CRO will maintain an electronic EI Record for each child referred to the SPOE, regardless of the outcome of the referral, e.g., eligible or not, accept or decline service, etc.
  - c) The SPOE will assist the CRO to maintain and update the electronic EI Record, including a comprehensive checklist of activities to determine if all appropriate steps have been followed, and document that procedures have been implemented to secure eligibility determination and the development of an IFSP in a timely manner within 45 days of referral.
  - d) Ongoing service documentation including notifications, IFSP reviews/evaluations and new IFSPs, key correspondence and releases shall be maintained by the SPOE.
5. ELIGIBILITY - Ensure that eligibility determination is completed according to regulations\*
  - a) Arrange or collect relevant assessments and evaluations necessary to determine eligibility; and/or the development of the IFSP for eligible children,
  - b) Utilize Eligibility Determination (ED) team members in adherence to State guidelines in the determination of eligibility and authorizations of services,
  - c) Update the child's record with the SPOE and CRO,
  - d) Ensure that a multidisciplinary ED team will review the materials assembled to assist in eligibility determination with the Intake Coordinator and parent/legal guardians, and document this accordingly,
  - e) Advise and provide documentation to the parent of their due process and procedural safeguards related to eligibility determination activities or activities necessary to develop the IFSP, in a timely manner\*.
  - f) Facilitate timely communication with the child's primary care physician to assist in the eligibility determination and IFSP service planning.

\* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP.



6. ELIGIBILITY - Arrange for and ensure the timely completion (within 45 days) of necessary assessments and evaluations to either 1) determine eligibility, or 2) collect and disseminate required information necessary to plan and complete an IFSP:
  - a) Create authorizations for essential and necessary diagnostic and/or developmental, specialty assessments/evaluations,
  - b) Collect relevant reports and input, working with the ED Team to determine eligibility or ensure that all appropriate information is available prior to arranging for the IFSP team meeting.
7. IFSP - Facilitate the IFSP Team Meeting, adhering to State and Federal guidelines and completion of the initial IFSP:
  - a) Ensure that the variety of planning activities prior to the IFSP team meeting are conducted with each family of an eligible child
  - b) Ensure that each family understands the IFSP process, is familiar with the IFSP format, and is well prepared as an equal participant to the IFSP team for the scheduled meeting\*
  - c) Ensure that an initial IFSP is developed for each eligible child within 45 days of referral
  - d) Assist the family in locating available provider(s) for identified IFSP services through the review of the provider matrix.
  - e) Develop timely and accurate authorization(s) for services based on the IFSP
  - f) Establish positive, ongoing linkages with service coordinators and the family.
8. ADMINISTRATION - Perform clerical functions related to CRO authorization(s) for IFSP services:
  - a) Ensure consistent procedures
  - b) Provide timely and accurate data entry
9. ADMINISTRATION - Maintain and provide consistent, comprehensive data to assist local and state planners.
10. SERVICE COORDINATION - SPOE will ensure that each family is provided with a single ongoing service coordinator who is employed by the SPOE. Service Coordinators need to perform all functions required to meet Federal requirements for service coordination and due process as specified throughout 34CFR303.

The SPOE will carry out these functions through the development of qualified staff. Intake coordination position(s) should be assigned with the primary responsibility to respond to all referrals. The intake coordinators must be provided with adequate staff or clerical support to ensure that EI records and the data system between the SPOE and CRO is maintained and current and in compliance with federal and state regulations for Part C.

### III. SPOE OUTCOMES

**The following outcomes will be utilized as markers of success. Each outcome will be worth one percent of the contract amount (one half of a percent for each progress report period). The SPOE will only be allowed to bill for these performance metrics after the state has determined which outcomes have been met following each progress period.**

1. REFERRAL – The SPOE will work in collaboration with the Department of Child Services (DCS) to ensure referrals for screenings of children involved in cases of substantiated abuse and/or neglect or who have been exposed to illegal substances.
2. IFSP - Will be developed with ED team involvement at the meeting and EI services to meet child's and family's outcomes will be provided in the child's natural environment including the home and community settings in which children without disabilities participate. Only when EI services cannot be achieved in the natural environment shall services be provided in another setting. SPOE will need to track ED team IFSP attendance monthly and submit to the State quarterly. SPOE must demonstrate and document that a good faith effort was put forth to include all IFSP ED team members. The initial IFSP meeting will be held within 45 days of referral to the SPOE. EI Files will not be closed and reopened in order to avoid the 45-day timeline. SPOEs must document (in the EI file) why each reopened file was closed and reopened and submit log to the State\*. A primary care physician signature for the IFSP will be obtained in a timely manner which allows services to start within 30 days.
3. TRANSITION – The SPOE will initiate transition activities for children referred to First Steps at thirty (30) months of age or older and will convene a transition meeting in conjunction with the IFSP. Each IFSP will contain a completed transition page\*. Also, SPOE will electronically disseminate the Part B child find activity information semi- annually per State instruction\*.
4. ADMINISTRATION – Files for all enrolled children will contain documentation, including the AEPS, to support eligibility as determined by an appropriate multidisciplinary ED team using the AEPS in accordance with state eligibility guidelines\*.
5. ADMINISTRATION – The SPOE will ensure accurate and timely data entry within 10 days of the receipt of applicable documentation. Supporting documentation must be located within the early intervention file for the child to support data entry. SPOE will ensure accurate and timely data entry of Family Interview and Exit Interview, including child development and progress\*.
6. ADMINISTRATION – Files for all enrolled children must contain accurate and complete documentation to support the family's income and private insurance. The SPOE must ensure that the information is maintained and regularly reviewed, at a minimum annually or as changes occur, to insure current and accurate information\*.

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed

## IV. SERVICE COORDINATION OUTCOMES

**The following outcomes will be utilized as markers of success. Each outcome will be worth one percent of the contract amount (one half of a percent for each progress report period). The SPOE will only be allowed to bill for these performance metrics after the state has determined which outcomes have been met following each progress period.**

1. SERVICE COORDINATION – Ensure all children will have a single ongoing service coordinator and ongoing service coordination activities meet State/Federal guidelines according to the service definitions. The service coordinators must meet with families for a face-to-face contact for a minimum of one (1) time per quarter for at least thirty (30) minutes or more often as needed by family. Service Coordinators must contact the family on a monthly basis via phone, e-mail, or letter and document all contact using state required or cluster forms. Staffing must be sufficient to ensure that ongoing Service Coordinators will not carry a case load averaging more than 70 families per month. If Service Coordinators are also conducting intake, the SPOE must declare the % of time conducting each activity and the case load will be prorated accordingly.
2. SERVICE COORDINATION – 6 month reviews and the annual IFSP review will be completed in a timely manner. State checklists for initial contact, quarterly contact, and six month review will be used. All services written in the IFSP are initiated within 30 calendar days from the IFSP date, with parent approval or within 30 days from the parent signature date on the IFSP service change page for newly added services. While providers actually start their services, service coordinators must do what they can to facilitate that process ensuring services are initiated within 30 days and must include documentation in the EI file\*.
3. TRANSITION - The SPOE will initiate transition activities for children referred to First Steps at thirty (30) months of age or older and will convene a transition meeting in conjunction with the IFSP. SPOE will electronically disseminate the Part B child find activity information semi-annually per State instruction. A transition meeting will be held for every enrolled First Steps child in accordance with State federal program guidelines. Every child will have a completed transition packet\*.
4. ADMINISTRATION – Average cost per child must decrease by at least 20% from the date of the last profile report.

\* These outcomes are APR indicators that the State reports to OSEP

The signatory below attests to the development and implementation of strategies designed to meet the above minimum requirements.

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Signature of Authorized Individual

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Date Signed